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Haig Says He Urged Pressure on Cubans Over Salvador in '81

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WASHINGTON, March 24 — Former Secretary of State Alexander M. Haig Jr. says in his forthcoming memoirs that he advocated bringing maximum political, economic and military pressure to bear on Cuba in 1981 "to force the issue early" in El Salvador, even if it brought a Soviet response.

In excerpts from the memoirs, Mr. Haig said, however, that his call for forcefulness found no support in the highest councils of the Reagan Administration. He named Vice President Bush, Defense Secretary Caspar W. Weinberger, William J. Casey, the director of the Central Intelligence Agency and the senior White House advisers, Edwin Meese 3d, James A. Baker, Michael K. Deaver and Richard V. Allen, then the national security adviser, as all fearing "another Vietnam."

"I was virtually alone in the other camp, which favored giving military and economic aid to El Salvador while bringing the overwhelming economic strength and political influence of the U.S., together with the reality of its military power, to bear on Cuba in order to treat the problem at its source," he said.

"In my view that the potential strategic gain from this combination of measures far outweighed the risks, and that the U.S. could contain any Soviet countermeasures, I was isolated," he said.

Mr. Haig said the other top officials were so concerned that "another Vietnam" would sap public support for the Reagan Administration's domestic program that they opposed his proposal and preferred modest aid to El Salvador and covert action in the region. He was not explicit in his memoirs on what specific actions he had in mind toward Cuba.

Mr. Haig, whose resignation was ac-

cepted by President Reagan in June 1982, has written "Caveat: Realism, Reagan and Foreign Policy," which will be published in a month by Macmillan. Time magazine will publish the first of two installments of excerpts on Sunday.

During the first six months of the Administration, despite his lack of support, Mr. Haig nevertheless began a highly publicized campaign to focus attention on Cuban and Soviet support, through Nicaragua, for insurgents in El Salvador. He said in the memoirs that this had the effect of alarming Fidel Castro's Cuban Government and of leading to a brief tapering off in supplies to the Salvadoran guerrillas.

Mr. Haig's point, which he makes in the memoirs, and which he made privately at the time, was that a more forceful Administration policy instead of the modest program that was eventually approved, would have led to an early resolution of the problem.

The memoirs contain sharp criticism and unflattering remarks about almost every member of the Reagan hierarchy, particularly the White House advisers, Mr. Meese, Mr. Baker and Mr. Deaver. The style is straightforward and terse. A publishing source said that the book had been ghost-written by Charles McCarry, the author of "Tears of Autumn" and other novels dealing with espionage themes.

Mr. Haig said he was stunned on the day after Mr. Reagan's inauguration to hear at a meeting at the White House that many of Mr. Reagan's aides wanted to cancel the agreement that had just been negotiated on returning frozen Iranian funds for the release of the American hostages in Iran. The hostages had been freed on Inauguration Day.

"This amazing proposition won the support of many in the room," he said. "Insofar as Jim Baker's reaction could be interpreted, he appeared to be in sympathy. So did Deaver. The President did not seem to be surprised by the suggestion; evidently he was prepared, in his remarkable equanimity, to listen to the most audacious ideas. I had to

say that I was appalled that such a cynical action could even be considered."

Mr. Haig said he had told the group it was a pledge of American honor to return the money. The President, he said, made no statement, just listened. In the end, Mr. Reagan agreed that it should be honored.

The former Secretary said he had been so deeply worried about Communist subversion in Central America that his first meeting with Anatoly F. Dobrynin, the Soviet Ambassador, was devoted largely to that subject.

"I raised with him the question of transshipment of Soviet arms through Nicaragua to the insurgents in El Salvador," Mr. Haig said. Mr. Dobrynin responded, "All lies," he said. "Photographs don't lie," I replied."

He said that Mr. Dobrynin commented that this was not the way to start a new relationship.

"How, he asked, should the U.S. and the Soviet Union begin to develop a dialogue?" Mr. Haig went on.

"I said, 'It is not acceptable to talk peace while acting differently,'" Mr. Haig said.

Mr. Dobrynin, the memoir continues, said that "it would be very unfortunate if the Soviet leadership formed the impression that the Reagan Administration was hostile to the U.S.S.R. because first impressions often persisted."

Mr. Haig said he responded that the United States was not hostile, but "offended by Soviet excesses." He said that he constantly raised "our concern with Cuba's role as a Soviet proxy."

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